

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (cancelled)

Claim 2 (currently amended): A method for manufacturing a skeleton structure member of a transport machine, the method comprising:
placing a bag or a vessel that has been pre-packed with multiple discrete microcapsules that include a core substance consisting of a liquid or a solid wrapped with a thermoplastic resin film inside a skeleton member and/or a space bounded by the skeleton member and a panel member peripheral thereto; and

heating the microcapsules to gasify the core substance and soften the thermoplastic film and thereby cause the microcapsules to expand and thus form hollow granules having an external diameter within the range of 10 µm to 200 µm that, upon cooling, solidify within the skeleton member and/or the space bounded by the skeleton member and the panel member peripheral thereto and bond together as a solidified granular bulk material.

Claims 3 and 4 (cancelled).

Claim 5 (previously presented): The method according to claim 2 wherein the heating step is conducted at a temperature within the range of from about 130°C to about 200°C.

Claim 6 (previously presented): The method according to claim 5 wherein the heating step is conducted on a paint drying line provided in a production line for drying paint on the transport machine.

Claim 7 (previously presented): The method according to claim 2 wherein the skeleton structure member is a front side frame of a vehicle body.

Claim 8 (previously presented): The method according to claim 2 wherein the skeleton structure member is a side sill of a passenger compartment of a vehicle body.

Claim 9 (previously presented): The method according to claim 2 wherein the skeleton structure member is a front floor cross member of a vehicle body.

Claim 10 (previously presented): The method according to claim 2 wherein the skeleton structure member is a front pillar of a vehicle body.

Claim 11 (previously presented): The method according to claim 2 wherein the skeleton structure member is a center pillar of a vehicle body.

Claim 12 (previously presented): The method according to claim 2 wherein the skeleton structure member is a rear pillar of a vehicle body.

Claim 13 (previously presented): The method according to claim 2 wherein the skeleton structure member is a door beam of a vehicle body.

Claim 14 (previously presented): The method according to claim 2 wherein the skeleton structure member is a roof side rail of a vehicle body.